

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1275

By Watson

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Darde Long for her
twenty-five years of meritorious service as the
Director of the Chattanooga Zoo.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who, through their extraordinary efforts, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, Darde Long is one such estimable person and beloved leader who has served with distinction for twenty-five years as the Director of the Chattanooga Zoo; and

WHEREAS, for the past quarter-century, Ms. Long has stood resolute at the helm of the Chattanooga Zoo, brilliantly guiding the enterprise with acumen and alacrity and cultivating its growth into the informative, entertaining, and successful zoo it is today; and

WHEREAS, born in Chattanooga, Darde Long has always possessed a deep and abiding love for the animal kingdom and, at the tender age of nine, she decided she would one day work with animals; and

WHEREAS, remaining committed to pursuing her dream, Ms. Long attended Auburn University and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, continually expanding her knowledge and interest in zoos and animals; and

WHEREAS, Darde Long began her illustrious tenure as the Director of the Chattanooga Zoo in 1985 and, since her first day, has worked assiduously to resurrect and revitalize this important Chattanooga institution; and

WHEREAS, she was instrumental in forming "Friends of the Zoo" in 1985; earned zoo accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums in 1998; added a variety of exhibits to the zoo, including Hank the chimpanzee, snow leopards, red pandas, and jaguars; and, in 2008,

added a \$4.2 million entrance complex, complete with a gift shop, concession pavilion, and carousel, which expanded the overall zoo property by thirty-five percent; and

WHEREAS, devoted to working for the proper care and protection of animals even during her free time, Ms. Long often rescues abandoned dogs from a life on the streets; and

WHEREAS, an active and important member of her community and profession, Darde Long is a Professional Fellow member of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), serving on the AZA Site Selection Committee, and is a member of the board of the Zoo Conservation Outreach Group; and

WHEREAS, a woman of faith, Ms. Long is a devout member of the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church; and

WHEREAS, her many professional accomplishments aside, Darde Long is most grateful of the love and companionship she shares with her husband, Rick Jackson, the head of Exhibits and Maintenance at the zoo; and

WHEREAS, throughout her estimable career, Ms. Long has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of her colleagues and her community; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Long epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Darde Long for her dedication to the City of Chattanooga and to the State of Tennessee, its citizens, and its animals; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Darde Long for her meritorious service to the State of Tennessee, honor her singular contributions to the Chattanooga Zoo, and extend to her our best wishes for all her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.